

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11

OMB-01 NEA-10 /077 W

-----121601 061050Z /14

R 060918Z SEP 78

FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1928

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 2783

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CH, PINT, PINR

SUBJ: LEADERSHIP APPEARANCES: WU TEH AND CHEN HSI-LIEN

1. SUMMARY. POLITBURO MEMBER AND PEKING PARTY BOSS WU TEH HAS APPEARED SEVERAL TIMES SINCE LATE LAST WEEK DESPITE WIDESPREAD RUMORS THAT HE IS ABOUT TO BE REPLACED. COMING JUST BEFORE HUA'S RETURN, WU'S APPEARANCES SEEM DESIGNED TO BOLSTER HIS PUBLIC POSITION AND AUTHORITY IN ANTICIPATION OF POSSIBLE POLITBURO CONSIDERATION OF HIS STATUS AS PEKING'S LEADING OFFICIAL. IN ADDITION, POLITBURO MEMBER AND PEKING MILITARY REGION COMMANDER CHEN HSI-LIEN, WHO HAS ALSO BEEN AN OBJECT OF SCORN, MAINTAINED HIGH VISIBILITY. END SUMMARY.

2. POLITBURO MEMBER AND PEKING CCP LEADER WU TEH HAS MADE SEVERAL SOLO APPEARANCES SINCE LATE LAST WEEK AND WAS IDENTIFIED TWICE AS CHAIRMAN OF THE PEKING REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE. WU HAS BEEN THE TARGET OF A WIDESPREAD WHISPERING CAMPAIGN, POSTER CRITICISM AND AT LEAST TWO ARTICLES IN
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PEOPLE'S DAILY THIS SUMMER. ACCORDING TO OUR RECORDS, WU HAS NOT BEEN IDENTIFIED AS PEKING'S LEADING OFFICIAL SINCE EARLY JULY. WU'S POSITION HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY UNTENABLE AND SOME PEKING RESIDENTS ARE NOW OPENLY TALKING ABOUT HIS REPLACEMENT, POSSIBLY BY ANHWEI FIRST SECRETARY AND TENG ASSOCIATE WAN LI. COMING JUST BEFORE HUA'S RETURN TO PEKING AND EXPECTED LEADERSHIP CONSIDERATION OF WU'S POSITION AS

PEKING PARTY BOSS, WU'S APPEARANCES IN THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS APPEAR DESIGNED TO BOLSTER HIS PUBLIC POSITION. HIS APPEARANCES, HOWEVER, MAY BACKFIRE AND GENERATE FURTHER OPPOSITION AND POSTER CRITICISM OF WU BY PEKING'S RESIDENTS.

3. IN ADDITION, POLITBURO MEMBER, VICE PREMIER AND PEKING MILITARY REGION COMMANDER CHEN HSI-LIEN WAS HIGHLY VISIBLE OVER THE WEEK-END. CH'EN APPEARANCES ARE LESS SURPRISING. HIS POSITION AS COMMANDER OF THE PEKING MILITARY REGION WAS REAFFIRMED IN EARLY JUNE AND SOME PEKING ANALYSTS FEEL THAT CHEN MAY HAVE MADE HIS PEACE WITH TENG HSIAO-PING. OVER THE WEEKEND, HE CONTINUED HIS USUAL PATTERN OF ATTENDING SPORTS EVENTS AND HE MET WITH THE NEPAL CIVIL AVIATION DELEGATION, PRESUMABLY BECAUSE CHEN VISITED NEPAL IN 1976. WOODCOCK

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